

# Child Feeding Guide

## Age 3 to 5 Years

At this age, parents often become concerned about their child's eating habits. Children often:

- eat few meats
- eat slower
- are easily distracted
- drink a lot of liquids
- eat few vegetables
- request lots of sweets
- ask for the same food over and over
- are picky



### Tips for Feeding your Child

- Keep a variety of healthy foods on hand to offer your child.
- Offer small portions and allow your child to stop eating when full.
- Offer 4 ounces or less per day of juice.
- Too many liquids including milk and juice may lead to poor eating.
- Use non-food rewards such as praise, hugs or stickers.
- Choose 1% or fat free milk and dairy foods.

#### Family Meals

Start early with family meals to help your child develop better eating habits.

- Your child will learn to make healthier food choices and be more accepting of new foods.
- Family meals help your child develop social skills when eating together.
- Obesity risk is lower for children who eat meals with the family.
- Children who participate in family meals have better grades in school.
- Family meals help your child to develop role models.



#### Preparing for meal time.

- Have meals and snacks at regular times.
- Keep mealtime pleasant.
- Allow your child to self feed with a spoon.
- Limit distractions by turning off the TV.
- To meet all your child's needs, 5-6 small meals per day is best.
- It takes 8-10 tries before a child may accept a new food.

#### Tips for preventing choking

- Always watch your child when eating.
- Encourage children to sit while eating.
- Foods that are firm, smooth, slippery or round can cause problems.
- Cut foods into child sized pieces.



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### Feeding Guide

<u>Food</u>	<u>Portion size</u>	<u>Servings per day</u>
Milk & Dairy	½ - ¾ cup (4-6 oz.)	3-4
Meats	2 - 4 tablespoons	2-4
Fruits & Veggies	3 - 4 tablespoons	4-5
Grains - breads cereals	1 slice ½ cup	3-4



½ cup cereal, rice or pasta is about the size of a baseball



¾ cup milk or yogurt is about the size of ¾ of a tennis ball

2 tablespoons is about the size of a golf ball

**Food is for energy so enjoy play during your day!**  
**Check the following website for ideas: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/>**



### Sample Menu

#### Breakfast

½ cup cereal  
6 oz. milk  
4 oz. juice  
3-4 tablespoons fruit

#### Lunch

½ turkey sandwich  
4 tablespoons cooked veggies  
½ banana  
Water

#### Dinner

2 oz. cooked meat  
4 tablespoons cooked veggies  
½ cup rice, pasta, or potato  
6 oz. milk

#### Snack

4 crackers with cheese  
4-6 oz. milk

#### Snack

4-6 oz. milk  
1 graham cracker



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